



# FALL RIVER FLASHES

October 2023

Committed to safely and economically provide reliable energy and other services which bring value to its membership.



## WHAT IS HELPING HANDS?

Helping Hands is a nonprofit separate from Fall River Electric with its own appointed board and is available to owner-members of Fall River Electric that may need assistance in paying for electricity to heat their home. Helping Hands may also provide firewood or purchase bulk propane for members in need. Contributions to Helping Hands come from members who choose to "round up" their monthly energy bill to the next dollar amount.

Today, more than 4,400 members contribute monthly. To join Helping Hands, simply call a friendly Member Services representative at 800.632.5726 during normal business hours.



## BE SURE YOU VOTE ON NOVEMBER 7

Election Day 2023 is Tuesday, November 7, with elections being held for city, county, and school districts. Polls in Idaho are open from 8am to 8pm. In Gallatin County, Montana, voting is by mail and must be received by 8pm. In Wyoming, polls are open from 7am to 7pm.

## Board Decides To Increase Rates Due To Inflation Plus Power Costs

Last year's inflation rate of 8 percent nationwide combined with the current rate through August of 3.7 percent may have been enough for Fall River Electric's board to consider a rate increase, but electricity usage by Fall River members has also increased significantly, causing the Co-op to purchase more power on the open market. Fall River has experienced member's power usage increase dramatically. Six of the past nine months have seen record kilowatt (KW) demand, while last December and January set an all-time system record for demand.

power costs, the board felt it prudent to increase residential and commercial rates to maintain the Co-op's exceptional financial status. This rate increase will be effective with member statements received in January 2024.

Fall River Electric management will be hosting three owner-member listening sessions in November to provide further details on this rate increase:

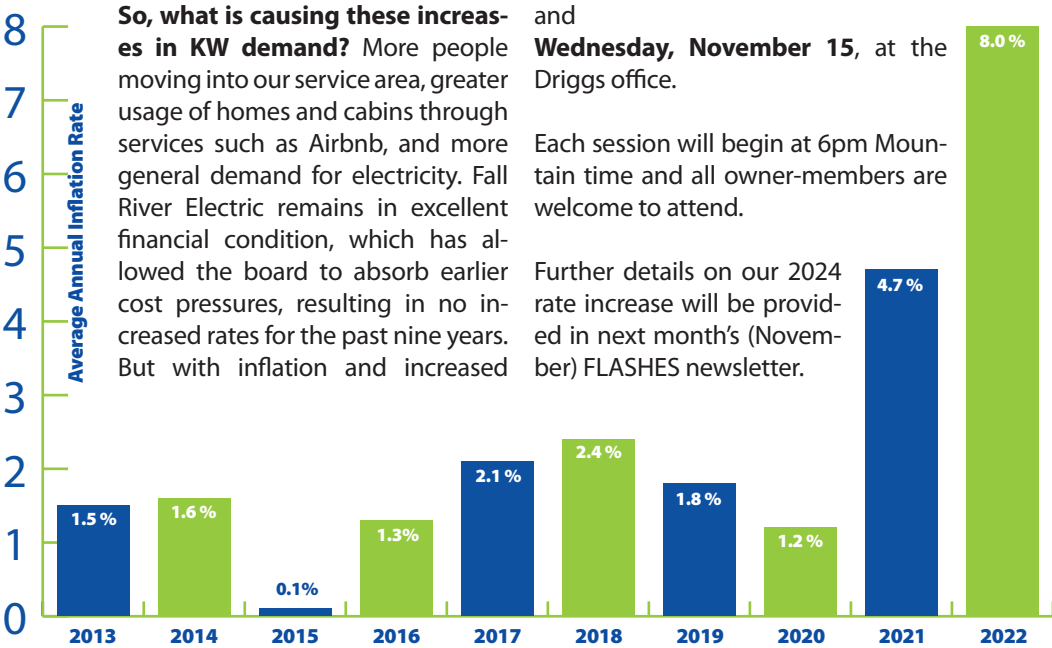
**Monday, November 13**, at the West Yellowstone Fall River office;

**Tuesday, November 14**, at the Ashton office; and

**Wednesday, November 15**, at the Driggs office.

Each session will begin at 6pm Mountain time and all owner-members are welcome to attend.

Further details on our 2024 rate increase will be provided in next month's (November) FLASHES newsletter.



## Fall River Is Celebrating National Co-Op Month

October is National Cooperative Month. Fall River Electric is just one of the 40,000 cooperative businesses throughout the country with 350 million members, ranging from national sporting goods store REI to your local ACE Hardware supplier and credit union, to food producers Land O'Lakes and Dairy Farmers of America and cheese manufacturers Tillamook County Creamery. Cooperatives generate \$652 billion in revenue, provide two million jobs, and create more than \$25 billion in wages, according to data from USDA Rural Development.

A cooperative business such as Fall River Electric is owned and controlled by members (customers), not by investors. The benefits? Cooperatives allow for a business model that ensures each member has equal say in the decision-making processes.

"A cooperative adheres to the same democratic principles used to establish our nation,



with every member having an equal vote in decision-making processes," says high school scholarship winner Eliza Higgins of Madison High School. "While an investor-owned utility is owned by shareholders who invest in the company with expectations of a financial return, a cooperative is owned by its customers with the primary goal of meeting their needs."

Cooperatives like Fall River Electric also generate jobs in their communities, keeping profits local. Local taxes help support community services. Fall River Electric is committed to owner-member outreach, including hosting an annual meeting and providing current information about the co-op.

This October, Fall River Electric wants to say, "Thank you!" for being an owner-member of our co-op!



*Where Service Matters*

800-632-5726  
208-652-7431

**ASHTON**

1150 North 3400 East  
Ashton, ID 83420

**DRIGGS**

1605 N Highway 33  
Driggs, ID 83422

**WEST YELLOWSTONE**

436 Madison Ave  
West Yellowstone, MT 59758

**All Our Offices Are Open**

Monday - Friday  
8:00am - 4:30pm

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**



**Husk Crowther**  
District 1  
Rexburg/Rigby  
Vice President

**Travis Markegard**  
District 2  
West Victor



**Georg Behrens**  
District 3  
East Victor  
President

**Anna Lindstedt**  
District 4  
East Driggs



**Brent Robson**  
District 5  
West Driggs/Tetonia

**Dede Draper**  
District 6  
Ashton



**Jodi Stiehl**  
District 7  
South Island Park  
Secretary/Treasurer

**Jeff Keay**  
District 8  
North Island Park



**Doug Schmier**  
District 9, West Yellowstone

**Bryan Case**  
Fall River Electric  
CEO/General Manager



Fall River's **FLASHES** newsletter is printed on recycled paper and is certified by the Forest Stewardship Council. Products certified by FSC directly support responsible forest management.

Want your Fall River **FLASHES** faster? Click [www.fallriverelectric.com](http://www.fallriverelectric.com) and then select the tab "My Cooperative" followed by the drop-down menu "Fall River Electric Newsletter."

Keep up to date, including on power outage information, by "liking" Fall River Electric on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/fallriverrec](http://www.facebook.com/fallriverrec).

[www.fallriverelectric.com](http://www.fallriverelectric.com)

## Board Officers Elected

The Fall River Electric Board of Directors elected officers for 2023-2024. Georg Behren was re-elected president, Husk Crowther is the vice president, and Jodi Stiehl is the secretary-treasurer.



**Georg Behrens**



**Husk Crowther**



**Jodi Stiehl**

## Being Safe In Quake Country

Our region of the Rocky Mountains is earthquake prone, which means buildings can collapse and heavy items can fall, resulting in injuries and property damage. Earthquakes can happen at any time, any season, without warning.

### If an earthquake happens, protect yourself right away. Drop, cover, then hold on!

- If in a vehicle, pull over and stop away from buildings, trees, overpasses, and overhead power lines.
- If in bed, stay there and put a pillow over your head and neck.
- If outdoors, stay outdoors in a clear area if possible. If near slopes or mountains, watch for falling rocks, landslides, or, in winter, avalanches.

- Do not get in a doorway.

- Do not run outside.

### Prepare NOW

- Secure items, such as televisions, and objects that hang on walls. Store heavy and breakable objects on low shelves.
- **Practice Drop, Cover, then Hold On** with family and coworkers. Drop to your hands and knees. Cover your head and neck with

your arms. Crawl only as far as needed to reach cover from falling materials. Hold on to any sturdy furniture until the shaking stops.

- Create a family emergency communications plan that has an out-of-state contact. Plan where to meet if you get separated.
- Make a supply kit that includes enough food and water for at least three days, a flashlight, a fire extinguisher, and a whistle. Consider each person's specific needs, including medication. Do not forget the needs of pets. Have extra batteries and charging devices for phones and other critical equipment.
- Consider obtaining an earthquake insurance policy. Standard homeowner's insurance does not cover earthquake damage.

For more earthquake tips, visit [www.ready.gov/earthquakes](http://www.ready.gov/earthquakes).



## Take Safety Home: Avoid DIY Injuries

There are more than 40,000 table saw accidents annually with "kickbacks" as the leading cause of injury. A kickback is when the table saw blade launches, or "kicks back" a workpiece in the direction of where the user is standing. Follow the below safety tips to ensure you stay safe while working on your home project.

### Here are five safety tips:

1. Keep fingers three inches from the blade;
2. Never free hand;
3. Always use your splitter and guard on through cuts;
4. Use safety glasses and hearing protection; and
5. Give work your full and undivided attention.

